MENNONITE ARTICLES OF FAITH

Condensed and translated (1937) from Articles of Faith adopted and printed in Elbing, Germany, 1836.

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. 10:9-10).

First Mennonite Church
Newton, Kansas

MENNONITE ARTICLES OF FAITH

Condensed and translated (1937) from Articles of Faith adopted and printed in Elbing, Germany, 1836.

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. 10:9-10).

First Mennonite Church
Newton, Kansas

I. God the Creator of all Things.

The Lord Jesus, our Savior, said: "And this is life eternal that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3). "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." (John 14:1).

We therefore believe with the heart and confess with the mouth that there is one only God, who is almighty, holy, eternal and incomprehensible; who has created heaven and earth, the sea and all that therein is, the visible and the invisible, by his Word (Christ Jesus), from whom and through whom all things consist; who is omnipotent, omniscient, righteous, and who himself is love, (1 John 4:16). "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." (1 Tim. 6:16). He upholds and sustains all things, through his wonderful, providential care. He especially looks in mercy upon his believing children, as a loving father, who numbers the very hairs of their head.

This God we confess, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as He revealed himself at the baptism of Christ. For the voice of the Father was there heard, speaking from heaven: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matth. 3:17). Jesus, the Son of God was baptized by John in the

river Jordan, and the Holy Spirit descended from heaven, as a dove. Therefore the Apostle John wrote: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." (1 John 5:7). They are not three Gods, but one triune God, in whose name we are being baptized. We confess also the true divinity of the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, and believe that He is the Word, who was in the beginning with God. (John 1:1). Therefore Paul also describes Him thus: "Who is over all, God blessed for ever." (Rom. 9:5). John writes: "This is the true God and eternal life." (1 John 5:20). The Lord Jesus said to Philip: "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father". (John 14:9). This eternal Son of God, in due time, became true man, out of love to us human beings, when He left the throne of His glory, was conceived of the Holy Ghost by the virgin Mary and born of her, and was made like unto us in all things, yet without sin. (1 John 3:5; Heb. 2:14). "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us", (John 1:14). Nevertheless, He did not cease to be true God, "for in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). Therefore He is God and man in one person. This holy incarnation of the Son of God was accomplished that He might become our mediator,

to reconcile us with God, by the blood of the cross, through Himself. (Col. 1:20). We also believe on the Holy Spirit. He is not only the power and working bestowed upon the apostles and first Christians, but also the power of action through the gift of the Spirit, as Paul testifies: "But all this worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." (1 Cor. 12:11). And when Ananias had lied to the Holy Spirit, Paul said: "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." (Acts 5:4).

II. The Holy Scriptures.

We believe and confess, that God has given us the Holy Scriptures as a witness of the unfailing truth. We call all the canonical books of the Old and New Testament the Holy Scriptures. For Christ and the apostles have in their teachings quoted from the Old Testament, and we therefore believe that it is the pure, infallible Word of God and the eternal Truth. Whereas we know the sacred Scriptures to be the work of God and the revelation of His holy will, therefore it must be our guide and rule to direct us in our faith and life. "No prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy

Ghost." (2 Pet. 1:20-21). "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:16-17). "The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart." (Ps. 19:8).

III. The Image of God in Man and Adam's Fall.

We believe and confess, that in the beginning God created man in His own image. "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him." (Gen. 1:27). Thus man was created in true righteousness and holiness. His condition was very glorious and blessed, for he lived in the love of God and communed with his blessed and holy Creator.

But, alas, man did not remain in this happy state; through the transgression of God's laws he fell. "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat ot it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:16-17). This sacred command Adam and Eve transgressed, when tempted by the serpent, which is the Devil, or Satan. For they ate of the tree of knowledge of good and

evil, to which they were influenced by their lust, for they desired to be made wise as God. But the result of their disobedience was, that they and all their posterity fell into sin and death. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12).

IV. Redemption through Christ.

We believe that the Lord God has not left us in the fall, but sent His Son as a Savior of the world. He became man for our sake. After finishing his work of preaching the gospel, He suffered and died for our salvation on the tree of the cross, was buried and on the third day He rose again from the dead, and forty days after his resurrection he ascended into heaven. He has thus finished the whole work of redemption. Peter says, he has redeemed us with his precious blood, (I Pet. 1:18-19), and Paul says: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. 1:15). "He hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Heb. 9:26). "That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage". (Heb. 2:14-15). "But where sin

abounded, grace did much more abound." (Rom. 5:20). He hath obtained eternal redemption for us. (Heb. 9:12). This great kindness is proclaimed to us through the gospel, in order that all who believe in Christ, should not perish but have eternal life. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." (John 1:12). But whoever does not receive Jesus and is not converted, shall be lost because of his unbelief. Jesus says: "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3:18). "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." (Rom. 10:10).

V. The Universal Grace of God and Man's Free Will.

We confess that the grace of God, revealed in the gift of his Son, is a universal grace. For when the Lord God foresaw the fall of man, the gracious God had mercy over all mankind and in his love calls all, even the greatest sinners, into his kingdom through conversion. For Jesus Christ, the Son of God "is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2). And therefore we call this the universal grace, because the only good God has excluded no-

one from it. However, if any one does not partake of it, he must blame himself, because through unbelief and disobedience he has robbed himself of God's grace. "And this is condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." (John 3:19). "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." (2 Thess. 2:10). Jesus says: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16). But this work of grace through the Holy Spirit does not operate in man by force. To be converted, he must submit his will to the will of God. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do his good pleasure." (Phil. 2,13). The almighty God does not compel any one by force, neither for good nor for evil; nor does he predestinate any one through an unconditional choice of grace; but he allows us our free will.

VI. Faith in Christ.

We teach and confess, that it is not sufficient to merely know the history of Jesus and accept it is a general truth; nor is the mere confession of the mouth, though very important, not yet the true (saving) faith. The true saving faith is a faith of the heart.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1). Faith brings forth the knowledge of our lost condition and the consequent condamnation. It is a looking up to Jesus, as the Lamb of God which beareth the sin of the world. In faith one accepts Jesus and becomes a child of God, one receives forgiveness of sin and henceforth does not follow the lusts of the flesh, but strives to live after the will of God. Faith is confidence in God. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32). This faith is a gift of God and is wrought in us by God's Word and Spirit. "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (1 John 5:4). For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness. (Rom. 10:10)

VII. The New Birth and Good Works.

Because every man is by nature evil and all that is born of the flesh is carnal, we must be born anew to enter into the kingdom of God. This new birth is really the renewing of God's image in man. It is a change of heart and of a carnal to a spiritual mind; a crucifying of the lusts and desires of the flesh, and complete surrender of the heart to God. The new birth is

wrought in us by God. Peter teaches: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope. . ." (1 Pet. 1:3). The means whereby the new birth is accomplished is, first, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, when He convinces us of sin and awakens us to faith. Therefore the Lord Jesus calls it being born of the Spirit. (John 3). This act of regeneration is also called a birth by the Word of God, because James says: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." (Jas. 1:18). We are therefore born again through the living Word of God, which abideth for ever. (1 Pet. 1:23). Through the new birth one is enabled to do good works, which God has ordained that we should walk in them. (Eph. 2:10). One becomes heavenly minded and partakes of the divine nature freely to do good works out of love and to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing. (Col. 1:10).

VIII. Justification Through Faith.

We teach and confess that all who believe on Jesus Christ and are converted in their heart and born again, are through faith justified. No one is justified before God through his own good works; it is the work of God. He receives the penitent sinner through the atonement of Jesus Christ, for-

gives all his sins and adopts him as his child and heir to eternal life. The meritorious blood and death of Christ is imputed to the newborn believer as his own righteousness. Paul says: "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 3:23-24).

IX. The Church of God

God's children are living stones, built up together into a holy temple, of which Jesus Christ is the corner stone. (Eph. 2:20-21). These are the church of Christ which he hath purchased with his own blood. (Acts 20:28). They are called the church of God, the Church of Christ, the chosen generation, the royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people. (1 Pet. 2:9). This church is united with its Lord and Head, as the members of a body are united with its head. They also are members one with another, because they are united in love. God has so united the members of this body that they may have fellowship and not despise one another. They that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please themselves. (Rom. 15:1). No one among them shall think that he has no need of the other, or that he has received his talents for himself alone; for all are united and should use their gifts for a common good. Therefore it is necessary that

the believers meet to hear the preaching of God's Word. The Lord has promised: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matth. 18:20). The writer to the Hebrews admonishes that we forsake not the assembling of ourselves together. (Heb. 10:25). Therefore it is the duty of all true disciples of Jesus that they appear in the congregation and not absent themselves because of self-conceit or assumed piety.— Although a church cannot by any outward regulation avoid hypocrites and inactive members from creeping in, of which even the apostolic church was not free, the faithful children of God should therefore not be discouraged, because to the end of time the good and the evil must be together. In the great day of judgment the Lord shall know how to divide the good from the evil. (Matth. 25).

X. The Ministry of the Church.

We believe and confess, that the Lord is a God of order. "And he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelist; and some, pastors and teachers." (Eph. 4:11). Therefore we believe, that the ministry in the church is a divine institution. The Lord Jesus himself commanded: "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."

(Matth. 9:38). The church then is to look for men of good report and other good qualities, as required in 1 Tim. 3; Tit. 1; and 1 Pet. 5. And these shall rightly divide the Word of truth, and not speak what is contrary to the wholesome teaching; but to declare all the counsel of God to the flock entrusted to them. They must pray to God for them and watch over their souls as such who are to give an account thereof. (2 Tim. 2:15; Acts 20:27).

Such men who are called to the ministry of the church, shall be faithfud in their service, according to the ability that God has given them. They are not to withdraw under the pretense that no improvement is noticeable, for then they would be looked upon as hirelings, of whom Jesus speaks in John 10:12-13.

XI. Holy Baptism.

We confess that next to the preaching of God's Word, water baptism should be administered to such who believe and in repentance confess their sins. For the Lord Jesus himself was baptized and commanded it to his disciples, when he said: "Go ye, therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matth. 28:-19). This command of the Lord the apostles faithfully followed. They preached re-

pentance to God and faith in the Lord Jesus, and those who received the preached Word were baptized upon the confession of their faith. Therefore we also do not baptize any other persons, but only such who themselves confess their faith. And in the whole New Testament we find no command or example that any one was baptized without the confession of faith, as is seen from many references in Acts.—The Christian water baptism is not only a baptism of repentance, as John's baptism, but a baptism into the death of Christ, for it signifies to the believer a cleansing power of the blood of Christ.

XII. The Lord's Supper.

We believe and confess, that the Lord Jesus observed this holy sacrament with his disciples in the night when he was betrayed, and thereby instituted a memorial of his suffering. After the eating of the passover, he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave it unto his disciples, saying: Take, eat this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup, after supper, gave thanks, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Drink ye all of it, this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins. This do in remembrance of me. That this sac-

red ordinance should continue to be observed among Christians, is understood from the repeated command of our Savior himself, when he said: "This do in remembrance of me." To this Paul also witnesses, when he says: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor. 11:23-26). Therefore the apostolic church also observed this custom. They brake the bread from house to house on the first day of the week, which is Sunday. (Acts 2:46; 2:7). But whoever observes the holy supper only as a habit, without the due preparation of his heart, to seek the Lord and communion with Him, and in his heart is minded to continue living in sin; such a one is not worthy to eat the Lord's bread and drink His cup. "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." (1 Cor. 11:29). Those who desire to appear worthily at this holy meal must be repentent and believing Christians. "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup". (1 Cor. 11:28).

XIII. Footwashing of Believers.

We teach, that the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior, laid aside his garments, after supper, and took a towel and girded himself, and poured water into a basin, and began to wash his disciples' feet. So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments and was sat down again, he said unto them: Know ye what I have done unto you? Ye call me Master and Lord, and say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. (John 13). That this service was also practiced by the first Christians, is seen from 1 Tim. 5:10, where it is mentioned among the Christians of works of love. At what occasion it should be practiced we do not find definitely described. Mainly we are to notice that the Lord Jesus herewith wanted to demonstrate, how he in pure love, humbled himself, and took upon him the form of a servant, to redeem us from sin, and to teach us how to follow him in humility and love and to serve each other.

XIV. Christian Marriage.

We acknowledge, that God himself instituted marriage for Adam and Eve. (Gen.

1:22). But he has thus ordained it: that there shall be **one** man and **one** wife in wedlock. (1 Cor. 7:2). The Lord Jesus said: "Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female. And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall be one flesh." (Matth. 19:4-5). Married people shall also not be divorced. For the Lord Jesus says: "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. And whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." (Matth. 19:6,9). The apostle Paul writes. "And to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband; and let not the husband put away his wife." (1 Cor. 7:10-11). Married people shall live a chaste and respectable life in their matrimonial state. "Marriage shall be honorable in all and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." (Heb. 13: 4). Persons who may enter the state of matrimony are such who are not too close in blood relation according to the precepts of God's Word in Lev. chapters 18 and 20.

For although this command is given only in the Old Testament, it nevertheless retains its force; for in the whole New Testament we find no reference that it has been abolished, or is otherwise ordained. Moreover, persons who want to be joined in wedlock should be believing church members, for the marriage should be in the Lord. But a marriage to an unbeliever, or for a carnal purpose only, is not according to divine order, and cannot be called a marriage in the Lord. But if a member of our church nevertheless enters into such a union, such a step is considered as a deliberate separation from the church. Therefore we in brotherly admonition urge everyone to beware of such, and to enter matrimony in a scriptural manner. We also admonish in all love not to marry outside of our denomination to avoid shameful discord and other evil results, for instance, at the attendance of church services and the Lord's supper, or the rearing of the children. Persons who want to enter into wedlock should therefore examine themselves in prayer before God and also seek the advice of their parents and other relatives to follow it and not to grieve them, but to give them joy. (Prov. 10:1). But if a member of our church nevertheless marries a member of another evangelical church, we expect that, for the sake of the spiritual development of their

family life, they both become members of one church. But if one prefers to remain single, he also does well, according to the teaching of Paul, if only it is in Christian liberty, as no one is under obligation to God to either remain single or be married.

XV. The Office of Government.

We acknowledge that the government is a divine institution to which we shall be subject and obedient in all things and not oppose the law of God. (Acts 4:19). In Romans 13 it says: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God." We shall also render tribute, custom, taxes, etc. faithfully and willingly; not out of fear, but also for conscience sake. Herein we follow the example of our Savior, who also paid tribute money. (Matth. 17:27). We must also pray to God for kings (rulers) and the government and strive to walk in obedience to God's Word. Thus we will not receive punishment, but praise, of the same.

XVI. Vengeance, Non-resistance and Suffering.

We believe and confess, that the Lord Jesus said: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and

hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love you enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be children of your Father which is in heaven." (Matth. 5:43-45). And again: "But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil." (Matth. 5:39). These words plainly teach, that one shall not revenge himself against his enemies, but love them and be patient with them. All the teachings of Jesus are full of love toward friend and foe. Paul also taught: "Recompense not to man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Avenge not yourselves, dearly beloved; but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good." (Rom. 12:17-21). We shall follow our Savior, "Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." (1 Pet. 2:23). From these words we see, that all vengeance is forbidden us. Therefore we dare not use any sword or other weapon of

defense against our enemies. Paul says: "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." (2 Cor. 10:3-4). Whereas the Lord Jesus commanded Peter to put his sword into the sheath, we may not draw it out to defend ourselves against our enemies, or to use force, but should rather suffer and be patient. However, we must not only avoid the sword of war, but our heart and mouth shall also not practice vengeance. We shall follow the Lamb, where He goes; not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but in quietness bless, if we want to merit a blessing.

XVII. The Oath.

We believe, that in the Old Testament time it was permitted the believers to swear in the name of the Lord and that they were commanded not to take a false oath. But the Lord Jesus, who is the end of the law, expressly said: "Again ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths. But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither

shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let you communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than this cometh of evil." (Matth. 5:33-37). But instead of an oath, what is promised or witnessed by us with a conscientious yea (yes), that shall also abide in truth. With God it will be as highly honored, as when others take an oath. "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death." (Rev. 21:8). Therefore we should from the heart speak the truth, at whatever occasion it may be. No one shall imagine that only the judicial oaths are forbidden; but we shall also refrain from all frivolous swearing and profanity; for the salvation of the soul is precious to us. Jesus says: "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." (Matth. 12:36).

XVII. Church Discipline.

We believe and teach that, according to the command of Christ and his apostles church discipline or separation should be practiced in the church to those who live in sin and vices. The Lord Jesus teaches thus about it: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he

shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." (Matth. 18:15-17). Notice that this is spoken of a sin between brother and brother. But such who openly live in the works of the flesh and whom the Apostle Paul excludes from the kingdom of God, and whose deeds are deemed shameful and punishable by the law; such persons must be excluded from the church, without further consideration. This separation shall be done openly before the church, as Paul commands it to Timothy: "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." (1 Tim. 5:20). Such persons and their deeds one should shun, as Paul writes: "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: yet not altogether with fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolators; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one not to eat." (1 Cor. 5:9-11). And again:

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." (2 Cor. 3:6.). "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." (2 Thess. 3:14). However, we need to be careful, that under pretense of shunning, we do not allow enmity to creep in; for it further says: "Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." (2 Thess. 3:15). But if the separated person acknowledges and confesses the committed sins and shows genuine fruits of repentance, and properly applies for re-admission into the church, after much prayer and supplication to God, we must forgive him and receive him back into the brotherhood of the church. "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which is inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather the more to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such an one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow." (2 Cor. 2:6-7). Over such a sinner that repents there is joy in heaven, more than over ninety and nine righteous, who need no repentance. (Luke 15:1-10).

XIX. The Resurrection of the Dead.

We believe that all people who have died

and shall die in the future, shall once live again and rise from the dead, as is made clear from the writings in the Old and the New Testament. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt." (Dan. 12:2). And the Lord Jesus said: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5:28-29). Paul the faithful apostle of the Lord writes thus: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." (1 Cor. 15:3-4). "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that sleep. For since by man came death,

by man came also the resurrection of the dead." (1 Cor. 15:12-21).

XX. The Final Judgment.

We believe and confess, that a final or last day shall come without fail, on which the Lord God will judge the whole world. But this judgment will be executed through Christ, the Son of God, as Jesus himself testifies: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." (John 5:22,29). Those who are to be judged are all people. "And before him shall be gathered all nations." (Matth. 25: 32). The evil and the good shall be judged. "So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God." (Rom. 14:12). The appearing of this great Judge will be very majestic and glorious. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." (1 Thess. 4:16). He will be accompanied by many thousands of angels and will therefore appear in great power and glory, so that all nature will be moved and astonished. Then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and all eyes shall see him, even his enemies who have pierced him.—How the judicial sentence will then be executed, the Lord Jesus himself

has shown: "And he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." (Matth. 25:31-46).

This is the foundation of our Christian faith, as we find it established in the Holy Scriptures and as taught by our fathers. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 3:11).